

## Message Text

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UNCLAS MOSCOW 13906

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, UR

SUBJECT: SEMINAR/EXHIBITION ON RETAIL TRADE MODERNIZATION:  
POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION BY SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO.

USDOC FOR BEWT/TPD/THOMPSON

1. SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO. EXPORT SALES MANAGER J.A.NORRIS  
MET SEPTEMBER 26 WITH DEPUTY MINISTER OF TRADE F.D.FESENKO  
TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE POSSIBLE ROLE BY SEARS IN RETAIL TRADE  
MODERNIZATION IN USSR. FESENKO HAD EARLIER INDICATED HIS  
INTEREST IN COOPERATION WITH AMERICAN FIRMS AND IN OUR PROPOSAL  
TO HOLD JEEP ON THIS SUBJECT (SEE MOSCOW 12733). (NORRIS HAD  
WRITTEN COMMERCIAL ATTACHE EXPRESSING SEARS' INTEREST IN PRE-  
LIMINARY CONTACT WITH SOVIETS REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF MAKING  
SEARS' MANAGEMENT SERVICES AVAILABLE TO SOVIETS.)

2. DURING HOUR AND HALF MEETING WITH FESENKO, ATTENDED BY  
COMMERCIAL ATTACHE, NORRIS OUTLINED SEARS' EXPERIENCE IN SUCH  
AREAS AS WAREHOUSING, DISTRIBUTION AND INVENTORY CONTROL.  
NORRIS ALSO DESCRIBED RECENT INTRODUCTION OF POINT-OF-SALE  
(POS) AND OPTICAL READING SYSTEM, USING SINGER AND RECOGNITION  
EQUIPMENT INC. HARDWARE IN U.S. STORES AND NCR EQUIPMENT IN  
CANADIAN OUTLETS. FESENKO EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN  
SEARS' EXPERIENCE, NOTING THAT SCOPE AND GEOGRAPHIC REACH OF SEARS'  
SALES NETWORK WOULD BE VERY RELEVANT TO SOVIET RETAILING  
SYSTEM. FESENKO ALSO AGREED WITH NORRIS' OBSERVATION THAT SOFTWARE  
ELEMENT OF RETAIL TRADE MODERNIZATION -- E.G., SEARS' TRAINING  
PROGRAM--WAS PROBABLY MORE IMPORTANT THAN HARDWARE ELEMENT.

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FESENKO AND NORRIS AGREED TO CONTINUE CONTACTS, AND NORRIS

IS CONSIDERING INVITATION TO FESENKO TO VISIT SEARS IN U.S.

3. FOLLOWING MEETING AT MINISTRY OF TRADE, COMMERCIAL ATTACHE DISCUSSED WITH NORRIS PROPOSED EXHIBITION/SEMINAR ON RETAIL TRADE MODERNIZATION. FOLLOWING AREAS WERE MENTIONED AS POSSIBLE SUBJECTS FOR SEARS' PRESENTATION:

A) POS AND OPTICAL READING SYSTEMS;  
B) SEARS' MARKET RESEARCH PROGRAM,  
C) APPLICATION OF COMPUTERS IN INVENTORY CONTROL AND WAREHOUSING PROCEDURES;  
D) STORE LAYOUT AND DESIGN IN SUBURBAN SHOPPING CENTERS.  
COMMERCIAL ATTACHE SUGGESTED THAT A JOINT PROGRAM BY SEARS AND A HARDWARE FIRM (SUCH AS NCR SINGER OR RECOGNITION EQUIPMENT INC.) WOULD BE PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE. NORRIS AGREED TO EXPLORE WITH SEARS' MANAGEMENT POSSIBILITY OF PARTICIPATION IN DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE JEEP, AND PROMISED TO CONTACT BEWT/BLAIR THOMPSON RE POSSIBLE FORMAT.

4. ACTION REQUESTED. GIVEN IMPORTANCE OF SEARS IN AREA OF RETAIL TRADE AND DEPUTY MINISTER FESENKO'S UNMISTAKABLE INTEREST IN SEARS' EXPERIENCE, COMMERCIAL OFFICE BELIEVES USDOC SHOULD BE WILLING TO GO TO CONSIDERABLE LENGTHS TO SHAPE PROPOSED JEEP AROUND SEARS' PARTICIPATION. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THOMPSON COULD OFFER USDOC'S COOPERATION IN WORKING OUT MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE PROGRAM EVEN IF IT MEANS REVISING USUAL FORMAT OF MULTI-FIRM JEEP (E.G., LIMITING NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS TO FOUR OR FIVE). WE WOULD APPRECIATE BEING KEPT ADVISED OF ANY CONTACT BY SEARS.  
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